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O'HARE RAIL TRANSIT

A Report on the Potential
Utilization of Existing
Rail Right-of-Way

prepared by

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Chicago Area Transportation Study
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
List of Tables	v
List of Maps	v
Committee for O'Hare Rail Transit	1
Glossary of Special Terms	2
Route A Chicago and North Western - Proviso - Des Plaines Cutoff ...	7
Route B Chicago and North Western - Indiana Harbor Belt - Soo Line ..	9
Route C Chicago and North Western - Soo Line	11
Route D Chicago and North Western - Des Plaines Junction - Soo Line/Des Plaines Cutoff	13
Route E Milwaukee Road - Soo Line	15
Route F Milwaukee Road - Bensenville Yard - Des Plaines Cutoff	17
Route G Illinois Central - St. Charles Airline - B. & O. C. T. - Soo Line	19
Route H Chicago Transit Authority Kennedy Extension	21
Route I Chicago Transit Authority Lake Street - First Avenue Extension	23
Route J Chicago and North Western - Jefferson Park - Kennedy Expressway	25
Route K Chicago Transit Authority Lake Street - Soo Line	27
Summary	28



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LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
Comparison of Loop to O'Hare Running Times by Alternate Route A	29

LIST OF MAPS

Map A	6
Map B	8
Map C	10
Map D	12
Map E	14
Map F	16
Map G	18
Map H	20
Map I	22
Map J	24
Map K	26

COMMITTEE FOR O'HARE RAIL TRANSIT

This report was prepared in response to the request of a group of interested civic leaders and government officials of the City of Chicago. The report outlines eleven basic railway routes which could possibly be utilized in establishing a rapid rail service linking Chicago's Loop area and O'Hare Airport. Each route incorporates existing rail right-of-way for a major segment of the line haul with variable distance being composed of new right-of-way.

Route Selection

The primary function of this rail service was defined, for the purpose of this report, as the provision of a fast, safe, dependable means of ground transportation between O'Hare Airport and Chicago's Central Business District. Because of the need to provide a rapid terminal to terminal service, route circuitry should be kept to a minimum. Dependable service requires the elimination of line haul bottlenecks such as the possibility of conflicting freight movements. Safe operations should be assured through the segregation of rail-right-of-way from other surface modes, provision of modern train control signals, and well maintained roadbed. Each of the presented routes satisfies the above criteria in full or in part.

Selection of possible routes followed a series of field trips conducted in late August, 1968. These field trips directed specific attention to the apparent points enumerated above.

Alternative Routes

Eleven routes are presented as candidates for inclusion in the proposed O'Hare rail service. Routes A through D plus J utilize the Chicago and North Western Depot for the downtown terminal while Routes E and F utilize Union Station. Route G centers on Illinois Central lake front property paralleling Michigan Avenue and employs the St. Charles Airline as an east-west connector. Routes H, I, and K are not extensions of privately operated railway but rather proposed extensions of the Chicago Transit Authority network.

Glossary of Special Terms

- B. & O. C. T. - The Baltimore and Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and operates as a peripheral freight belt line around Chicago. Joint right-of-way is operated with the Indiana Harbor Belt between Blue Island and Franklin Park.
- The former Chicago Great Western (now part of the C. & N. W.) and the Soo Line utilize B. & O. C. T. trackage to reach the area south of the Loop. This trackage extends from the vicinity of Maywood eastward parallel to the Eisenhower Expressway to 16th Street and the junction of the South Branch of the Chicago River. Former Soo Line passenger trains utilized this trackage to reach Grand Central Depot.
- C. & N. W. - Chicago and North Western Railroad, a subsidiary of Chicago and North Western Industries, operates three trunk lines radiating out from Chicago. The West Line is the former Galena Division opened in 1848 and reaching westward to Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Northwest Line is the former Wisconsin Division operating trains to Madison, Wisconsin and constructed between 1851 and 1854. The North Line is the former Milwaukee Division operating trains along the North Shore into Milwaukee and beyond and constructed between 1854 and 1855. A freight-only line parallels the Milwaukee Division between Northbrook, Illinois and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This freight line is integrated into the main trunk lines by the Des Plaines Cutoff.
- C. M. St. P. & P. - The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, also known as the Milwaukee Road, consists of two trunk lines radiating out from Chicago. The West Line runs west through Bensenville and terminates at Kansas City and Sioux City. The North Line runs through Glenview to Milwaukee. Both lines join at Pacific Junction located near North Avenue and Pulaski Road, and both were completed into Chicago in 1872.
- Des Plaines Cutoff - The Des Plaines Cutoff is a multiple track freight-only right-of-way which allows freight trains of the C. & N. W. Northwest Line and North Line to reach the railroad's principal freight yard, Proviso, without entering the City of Chicago. This line extends northeast-southwest through the Des Plaines Valley and passes along the western edge of O'Hare Airport. Trains of the Milwaukee Road also utilize this trackage between Northbrook and Bensenville, Illinois. The line was opened in 1910.

- I. H. B. - The Indiana Harbor Belt is one of Chicago's major peripheral freight belt lines owned by the Penn Central and the Milwaukee Road. The portion of interest to this committee was constructed in 1897 and forms a segment of a network extending between Franklin Park and Blue Island. This double track facility is jointly operated with the Baltimore and Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad which is also a major peripheral freight belt line. A major freight yard - Norpaul Yard - is operated in Franklin Park south of Grand Avenue.

- Kinzie St. Approach - Both the Chicago and North Western and the Milwaukee Road share a grade separated right-of-way between Western Avenue and Noble Street. Therefore, it is possible the Milwaukee Road trains could enter North Western Depot for a Loop terminal and North Western trains enter Union Station -- if this committee should like to consider such possibilities.

- Illinois Central - The Illinois Central operates an electrified commuter service along Chicago's lake front between Randolph Street and Richton, Illinois. A western trunk line joins the main north-south trackage at 16th Street via the St. Charles Airline.

- Multiple Trackage - Line segment with two or more available main line tracks.

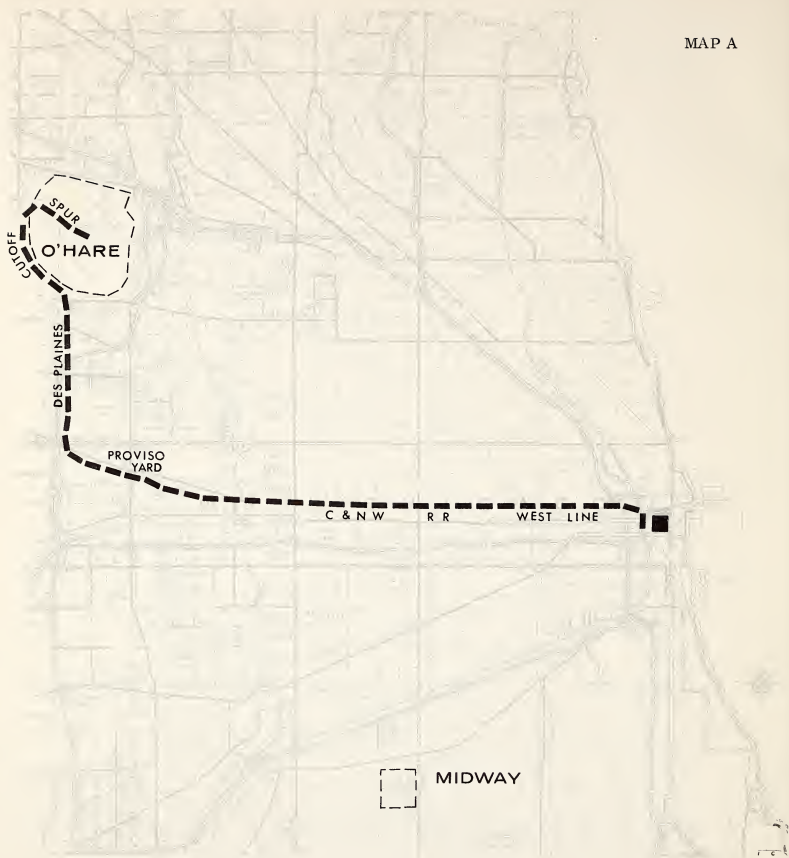
- Proviso Yard - The principal Chicago freight yard of the C.&N.W. is used for the classification of road trains. Actually, it is composed of two segments, the first an east-west body paralleling the West Line and the second a north-south branch paralleling the Des Plaines Cutoff.

- Soo Line - The Soo Line was formerly titled the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste Marie Railway, and is an American subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Railway operated as a bridge line by the parent road to gain access to the Chicago gateway. The Schiller Park yard of the Soo Line was built in 1898 as the major Chicago terminal point for road trains. Access to the other Chicago railroads is gained via the B. & O. C. T. at Forest Park.

- St. Charles Airline - An elevated railway line, eight-tenths of a mile in length from the southern end of the Illinois Central's Central Station at 16th Street westward to the South Branch of the Chicago River. This Airline is owned jointly by the Illinois Central, the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, the Michigan Central, subsidiary of the Penn Central, and the Chicago and North Western.

St. Charles Airline -
(Continued)

The line was positioned in 1855 and opened in 1857, first as a connector between the old Galena and Chicago Union (now C. & N. W.) and the Illinois Central and Michigan Central and later served as the inner most east-west connector for movement of interchange freight among several Chicago railroads including: the Rock Island and the old Michigan Southern (part of the old New York Central), the Santa Fe, the Burlington, and the B. & O. C. T.



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ROUTE A

Chicago and North Western - Proviso - Des Plaines Cutoff

As illustrated in Map A, O'Hare bound trains would depart from the North Western Depot and proceed along the West Line or former Galena Division of the C. & N.W. At the western periphery of Proviso Yard, O'Hare trains would connect with the Des Plaines Cutoff from which direct access to the south-west or west side of the airport can be effected.

The West Line of the C. & N.W. is grade separated between the Loop terminal and First Avenue. The main line is multiple tracked, well maintained and capable of supporting high speed operation. While the Des Plaines Cutoff is multiple tracked and also well maintained, speeds are restricted due to the volume of freight train movements concentrated along both the Des Plaines Cutoff and Proviso Yard.

Capital improvements would consist of construction of a turnout and necessary spur trackage between the Des Plaines Cutoff and the airport passenger terminals.

Initial Evaluation

This route must be judged as unsatisfactory since the goal of frequent, fast, dependable O'Hare service is not compatible with the density of freight movements prevalent along Proviso Yard and the Des Plaines Cutoff with the resulting potential for delays to O'Hare trains.



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ROUTE B

Chicago and North Western - Indiana Harbor Belt - Soo Line

Alternative Route B would also incorporate C. & N.W. trackage as far west as Melrose Park where trains would join the Indiana Harbor Belt right-of-way. O'Hare bound trains would then continue northward on I. H. B. trackage and effect a junction with the Soo Line south of Grand Avenue in Franklin Park. The Soo Line would be employed to a point just north of the Tri-State Tollway bridge where a turnout and spur track would give access to the eastern section of the airport and allow a connection with the airport access road for the final approach to the airline terminals.

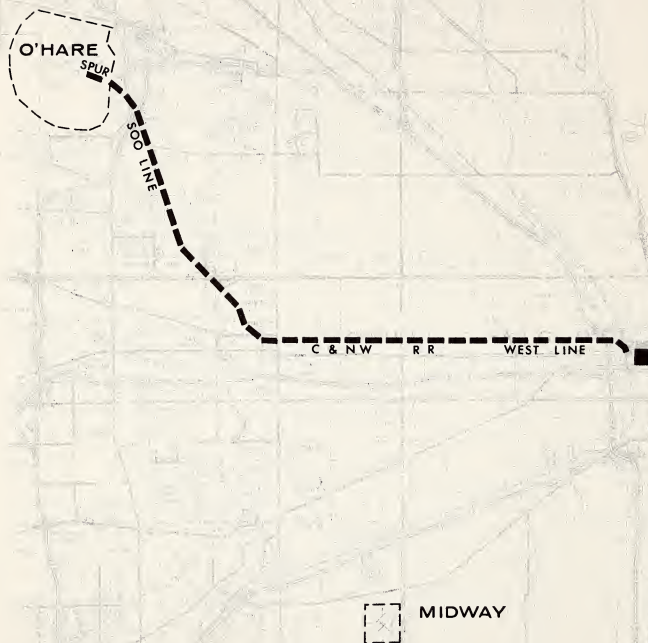
The Indiana Harbor Belt is double tracked and partially grade separated from highway traffic. A possible point of congestion is the Norpaul Yard which is located between North Avenue and Grand Avenue. Freight trains in excess of 125 car lengths are not uncommon along this section of the I. H. B. right-of-way.

The Soo Line is also double tracked and partially grade separated. Schiller Park Yard is the main Chicago area classification yard of the railroad but may not be a source of congestion for O'Hare bound trains since the yard can be effectively by-passed over a main line track lying on the western periphery of the yard. This main line track was formerly used by Soo Line passenger trains and currently serves only as an additional storage track for yard operations.

Capital improvements would be required at three points. The first would entail an inclined turnout at the junction of the I. H. B. and the C. & N.W. The second would require a physical link between the I. H. B. and the Soo Line just north of Norpaul Yard. The third would center about a turnout north of Schiller Park Yard and a spur track running across Mannheim Road and into the airport terminal complex.

Initial Evaluation

Route B may prove unsatisfactory for O'Hare service because of potential delays caused by freight traffic along the I. H. B. right-of-way. It is further noted that a representative of the Soo Line testified that management of his railroad regards O'Hare type service as incompatible with present Soo Line freight operations. While the Soo Line presently utilizes only one track of its two track main line south of Schiller Park, present volumes of freight traffic are taxing the capacity of Schiller Park Yard. The resulting need for additional yard trackage and the position of certain switching movements may make the Soo Line an undesirable route for O'Hare service.



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ROUTE C

Chicago and North Western - Soo Line

Alternate Route C would utilize the C. & N.W. West Line as far west as the River Forest junction with the Soo Line. The remaining line haul would continue along the Soo Line and into O'Hare Airport north of Schiller Park Yard. This entire route is multiple tracked and partially grade separated.

The most critical point in this proposal revolves around the ability to effect a junction between the Soo and the C. & N.W. The Soo Line bridges the C. & N.W. at River Forest. Thus, an inclined connection track would be required to join the two rights-of-way. However, because of the existence of several structures immediately to the north of the C. & N.W. right-of-way and to the east of the Soo Line, construction of the required track may result in an excessively sharp turning radius. Additional capital improvements between the Soo Line and O'Hare terminals are mentioned in the discussion of Route B.

Initial Evaluation

Although modern engineers can accomplish miracles, the required turn-out linking the C. & N.W. and Soo Line at River Forest appears to be expensive and inexpedient, particularly since the Soo Line trackage north of River Forest is not grade separated from highway traffic. Additional comments relative to Soo Line trackage are made under the evaluation of Route B.

ROUTE C

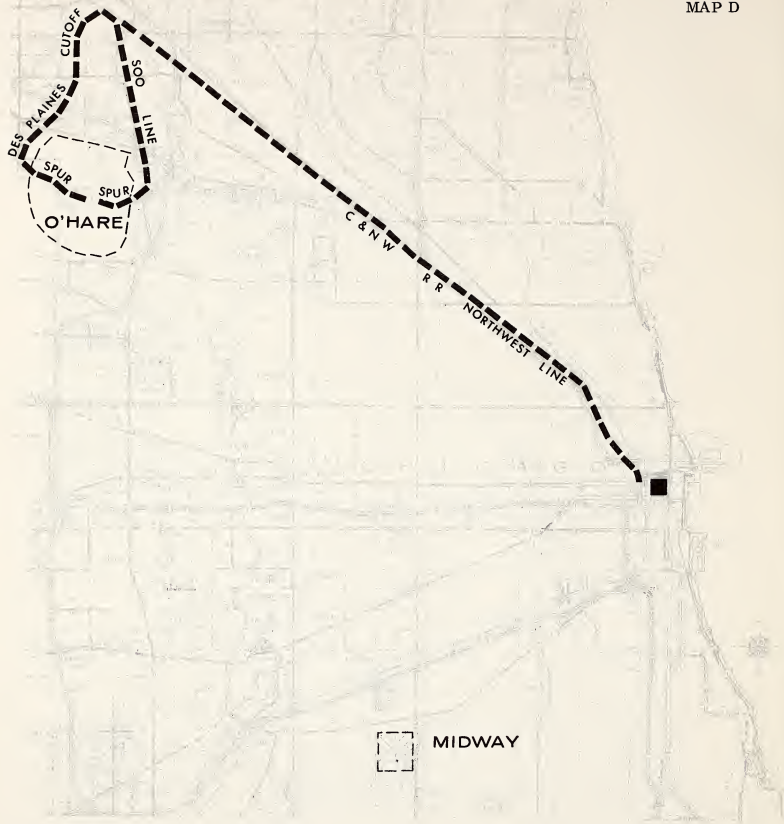
Chicago and North Western - Soo Line

Alternate Route C would utilize the C. & N.W. West Line as far west as the River Forest junction with the Soo Line. The remaining line haul would continue along the Soo Line and into O'Hare Airport north of Schiller Park Yard. This entire route is multiple tracked and partially grade separated.

The most critical point in this proposal revolves around the ability to effect a junction between the Soo and the C. & N.W. The Soo Line bridges the C. & N.W. at River Forest. Thus, an inclined connection track would be required to join the two rights-of-way. However, because of the existence of several structures immediately to the north of the C. & N.W. right-of-way and to the east of the Soo Line, construction of the required track may result in an excessively sharp turning radius. Additional capital improvements between the Soo Line and O'Hare terminals are mentioned in the discussion of Route B.

Initial Evaluation

Although modern engineers can accomplish miracles, the required turn-out linking the C. & N.W. and Soo Line at River Forest appears to be expensive and inexpedient, particularly since the Soo Line trackage north of River Forest is not grade separated from highway traffic. Additional comments relative to Soo Line trackage are made under the evaluation of Route B.



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ROUTE D

Chicago and North Western - Des Plaines Junction - Soo Line/Des Plaines Cutoff

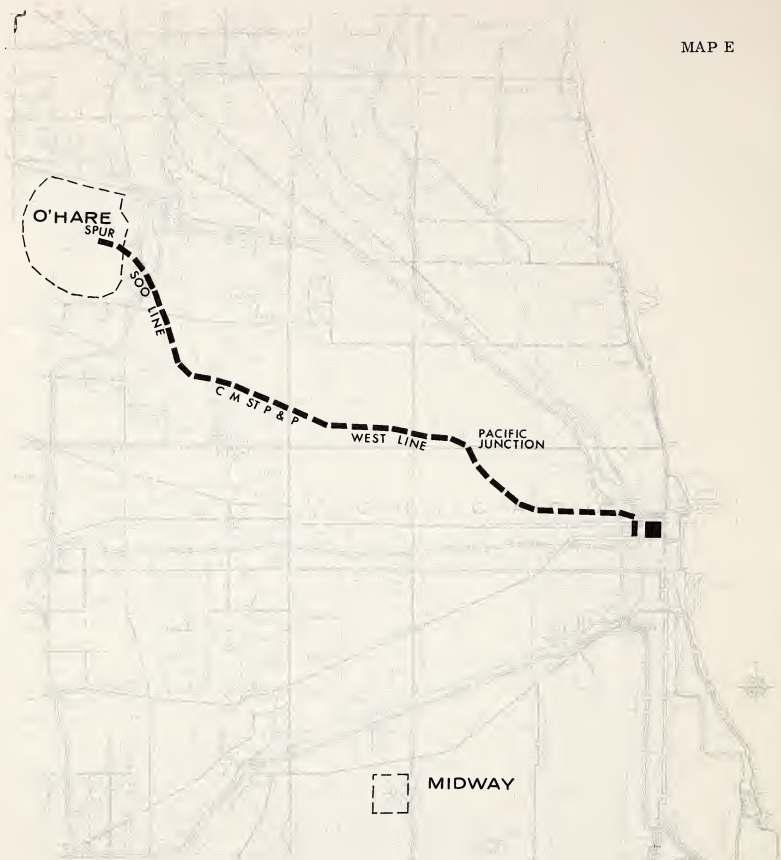
Trains would depart North Western Depot and be routed over the Northwest Line or former Wisconsin Division of the C. & N.W. as far as Des Plaines. Here a junction could be made with either the Soo Line or with the Des Plaines Cutoff -- both discussed earlier. Trains could run south on the Soo Line to the vicinity of Schiller Park and then enter the airport via a turnout and spur track similar to that discussed for Routes B and C. Or, trains could run southwesterly on the Des Plaines Cutoff and enter the airport from the west or southwest.

The Northwest Line of the C. & N.W. is multiple track between the Loop area and Des Plaines and is grade separated for a majority of the line haul along this segment of the proposed route. Both the Soo Line and the Des Plaines Cutoff are double tracked between their respective junctions with the Northwestern Line of the C. & N.W. and the proposed location for the airport entrance spurs.

Construction would be limited to the aforementioned airport spurs and accompanying turnouts (see Route A and B) and the placements of turnouts at either the junction point of the Des Plaines Cutoff and the Northwest Line or of the Soo Line and the Northwest Line.

Initial Evaluation

Excessive route circuitry is one objectionable feature of this route. The second objection concerns the congested freight traffic already prevalent along both the Des Plaines Cutoff and the northern tracks of the Soo Line. This combination of route circuitry and obvious freight conflicts make Route D a poor candidate for O'Hare service.



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ROUTE E
Milwaukee Road - Soo Line

Trains would depart from the northern concourse of Union Station and run out the West Line of the C. M. St. P. & P. to Franklin Park where a junction with the Soo Line would be effected. This route would then incorporate those sections of the Soo Line-Schiller Park-airport access spur discussed previously in Route B.

The Milwaukee Road shares a common right-of-way with the C. & N. W. which is multiple tracked and grade separated between Noble Street and Western Avenue. Between Western Avenue and Pacific Junction, the Milwaukee Road is double tracked and grade separated. On the West Line of the Milwaukee Road, grade separation continues up to the vicinity of River Grove with multiple trackage available for the entire line haul to and beyond Franklin Park.

Capital improvements beyond those associated with the Soo Line and the airport access spur include an at-grade turnout between the Soo Line and the West Line of the Milwaukee Road at Franklin Park.

Initial Evaluation

A minor potential bottleneck exists in the vicinity of Galewood Yard located near Courtland Street. Minor is the descriptive term employed since this freight facility does not appear to conflict with present Milwaukee Road passenger movements.

Despite adverse comments made by the Soo Line representative concerning the availability of Soo right-of-way, this route does have certain positive values. First, this route is one of the least expensive to construct since all that is required is a turnout track at the Soo Line -- Franklin Park Junction and the necessary airport turnout and spur track between Schiller Park Yard and the airline terminals.

Less than 2.5 miles of the Soo Line would be necessary for O'Hare service. Since land for expansion of Schiller Park Yard is mostly confined to the east of the freight complex and since the track necessary for O'Hare service passes to the west of the yard, this route tentatively should be considered as a viable alternative among the eleven basic proposed routes for further study.



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ROUTE F

Milwaukee Road - Bensenville Yard - Des Plaines Cutoff

Option (see below)

Trains utilizing this route would proceed along the West Line of the Milwaukee Road as in Route E. However, instead of running north on the Soo Line from Franklin Park, Route F trains would enter O'Hare via the Des Plaines Cutoff which can be reached from the western end of Bensenville Yard.

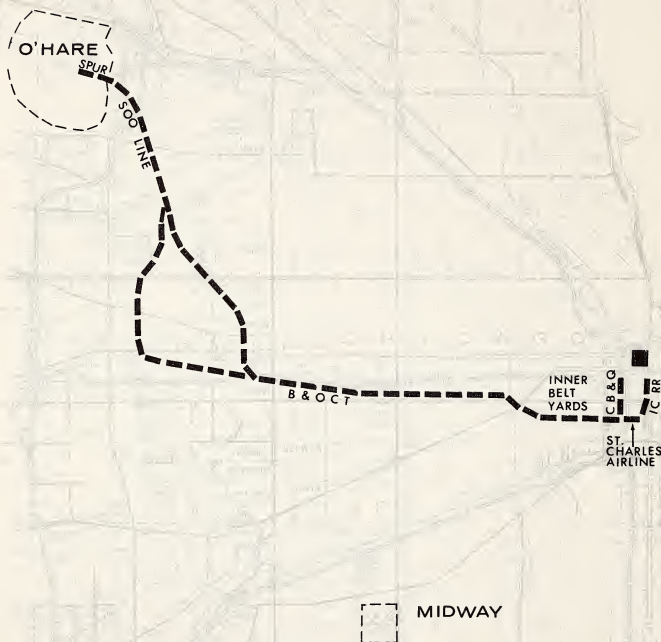
The West Line between the Loop and Franklin Park was discussed under Route E. West of Franklin Park the Milwaukee Road continues as a double track right-of-way crossing highways at grade and by-passing Bensenville Yard classification tracks on the northern edge of the freight complex. Direct access to the Des Plaines Cutoff is already provided.

The only capital improvement apparently required would consist of the turnout and spur track necessary to join the Des Plaines Cutoff and airport terminal area.

Initial Evaluation

Objection to this route centers about conflicting freight movements in the vicinity of Bensenville Yard and the Des Plaines Cutoff. Thus, on the criteria of dependable, fast service, this route would not be adequate.

Hence, an option off of this route would be to lay the airport spur tracks northward from Bensenville Yard (at a point in north-south alignment with Wolf Road) into the southern edge of the airport complex. This spur option off of Route F should be considered by the committee. Actual spur construction could be coordinated with the realignment of Irving Park Road scheduled for 1969.



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ROUTE G

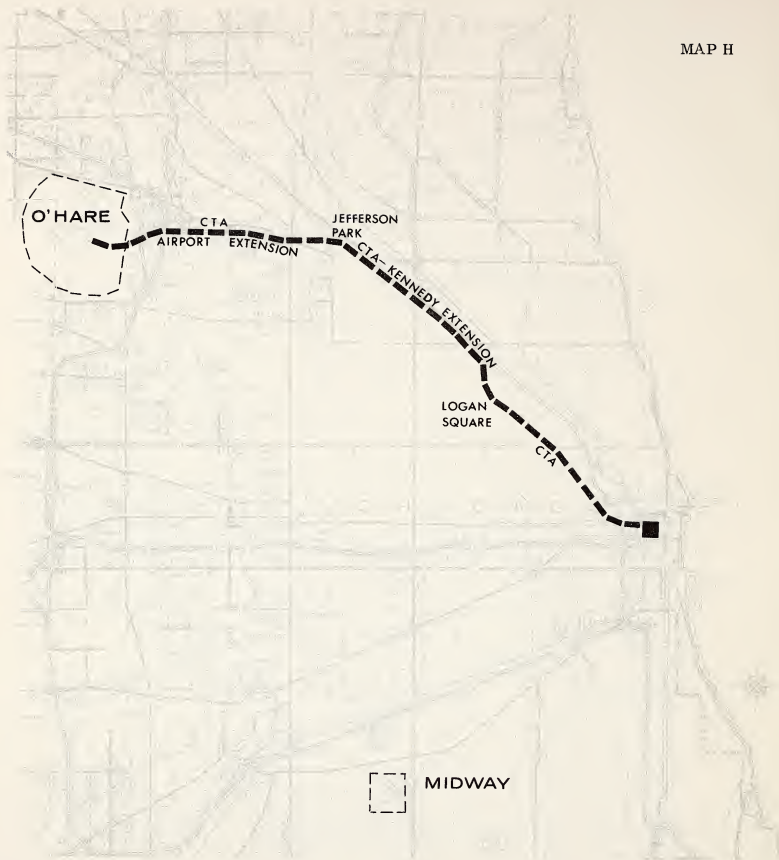
Illinois Central - St. Charles Airline - B. & O. C. T. - Soo Line

This route differs from those previously illustrated in that trains would reach the lake front area along Michigan Avenue rather than terminating on the western edge of the Loop. Runs would commence from Randolph Street Station presently serving as a terminal for the Illinois Central commuter trains and those of the Chicago, South Shore and South Bend. With a possible stop at Jackson Street, O'Hare bound trains would proceed south along the Illinois Central right-of-way and onto the St. Charles Airline. Along 16th Street, trains would run on the tracks of the B. & O. C. T. as far west as the Soo Line or perhaps as far west as Bellwood and then north along the joint right-of-way of the I. H. B. and B. & O. C. T. Both of these north-south routes lead to O'Hare and were discussed previously under Routes B and C.

Capital improvements associated with Route G might be limited to turnout and spur track construction in the vicinity of O'Hare Airport. While junction points with other rail routes are at grade, most highway crossings are grade separated on multiple track right-of-way.

Initial Observations

This route is not practical for O'Hare service for a variety of reasons. The first is associated with the present capacity limits of the Illinois Central trackage. This could be solved by simply routing O'Hare trains parallel to rather than on the electrified right-of-way of the Illinois Central commuter lines. This would effectively segregate the two services while allowing parallel operation. The most serious bottleneck revolves around the density of freight train movements prevalent on the "inner belt" freight tracks both parallel and perpendicular to the B. & O. C. T. trackage between Western Avenue and Cicero Avenue. Although passenger trains have in the past and to some extent continue to operate over segments of this proposed 16th Street route, O'Hare type service with possible 20 minute headways would prove unfeasible. A particular trouble spot is the junction of trackage in the vicinity of Western Avenue and 16th Street with its east-west and north-south at grade cross movements and multiple yards. Even the elimination of conflicting freight movements would not make this route desirable, since speeds along the right-of-way are restricted by numerous switch crossings and at grade crossings with other rails.



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ROUTE H

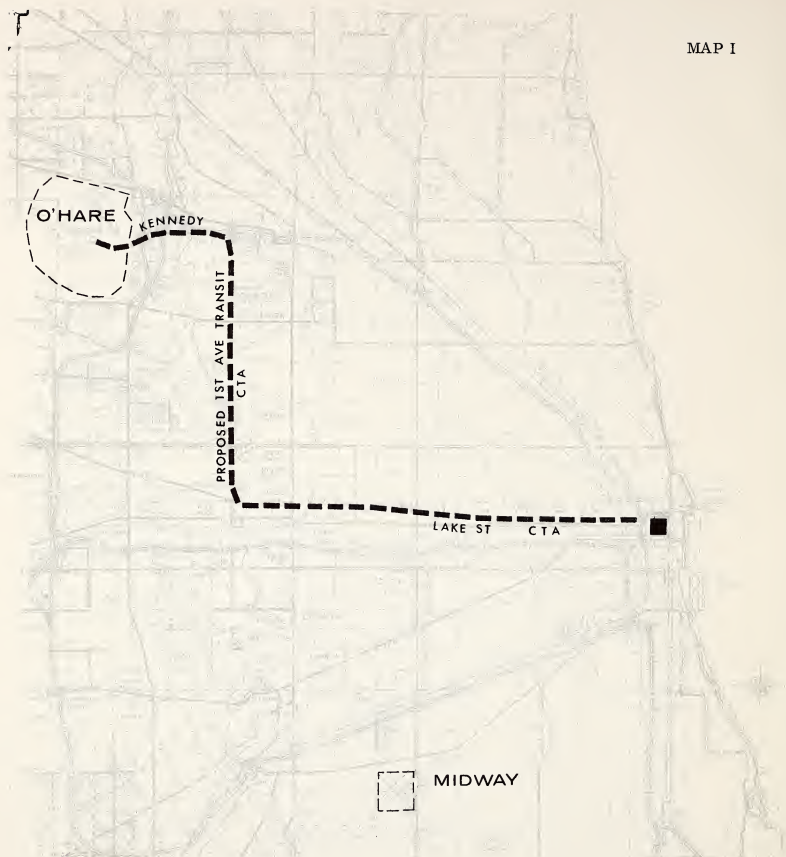
Chicago Transit Authority Kennedy Extension

Chicago could provide electrified rapid transit airport service similar to the type of access recently opened in Cleveland (fall of 1968). This would entail an extension of rail transit which would fully integrate airport service with the established rapid transit network. Accomplishment of this integrated service would involve additional extension of the Kennedy Expressway C. T. A. lines beyond the present proposed terminal area of Jefferson Park. *8 miles*

The right-of-way would be provided by the existing median strip of the Kennedy Expressway which is capable of supporting double trackage. The Kennedy provides a direct connection with the present airport access road and an approach to the airline terminal area. Capital costs would include the laying of ballast, ties, and trackage along with appropriate signalization between Jefferson Park and the O'Hare terminals.

Initial Observations

While this route possesses the advantages of no conflicting freight movements and integration with the entire C. T. A. system, it also possesses the disadvantage of extended running times between the Loop and O'Hare. Trains would of necessity run as locals up to Logan Square and perhaps as far as Jefferson Park, since this line does not offer express track capacity. Non-rush hour running time for automobile travel from the Loop to the airport is twenty-five minutes. While the airline terminal bus makes the same trip in the same time, it does require an additional ten minutes to reach the last of the three airline terminal stops, bringing its running time up to a maximum of thirty-five minutes. As the assumed running time for the C. T. A. Kennedy Extension is thirty-five minutes, this rail route may not be competitive during non-rush hours. Selection of this route should depend upon the market to be served: airline passenger or airport area employment.



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ROUTE I

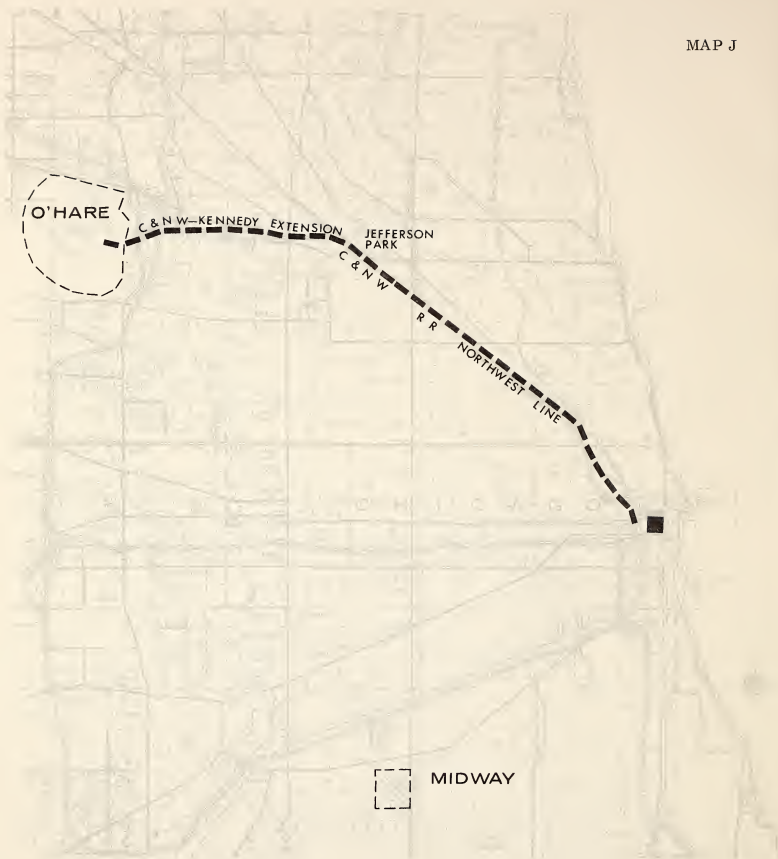
Chicago Transit Authority

Lake Street - First Avenue Extension

A long term solution to providing airport access involves the use of the present Lake Street C. T. A. lines between the Loop and Oak Park with an extension continuing west to the junction of the proposed First Avenue Expressway. This route would be similar to median type transit services now provided elsewhere around Chicago and would connect with the Kennedy Expressway at Norwood Park, thus entering O'Hare from the airport access road.

Initial Observations

The major drawbacks associated with this route are the length of new construction necessary to complete the line haul between Oak Park and O'Hare and also the fact that the First Avenue Expressway is not scheduled for construction until after 1975. Thus, this route satisfies the demands of the long range plan rather than an immediate action program.



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ROUTE J

Chicago and North Western-Jefferson Park-Kennedy Expressway

This alternate route combines the high speed non-stop capabilities of the C. & N.W. Northwest Line with the potential for direct airport access offered by the Kennedy Expressway median strip. Train would depart North Western Depot and proceed along the Northwest Line to Jefferson Park. At this point, the O'Hare bound trains would be routed into the Kennedy median strip for the five mile run into O'Hare Airport.

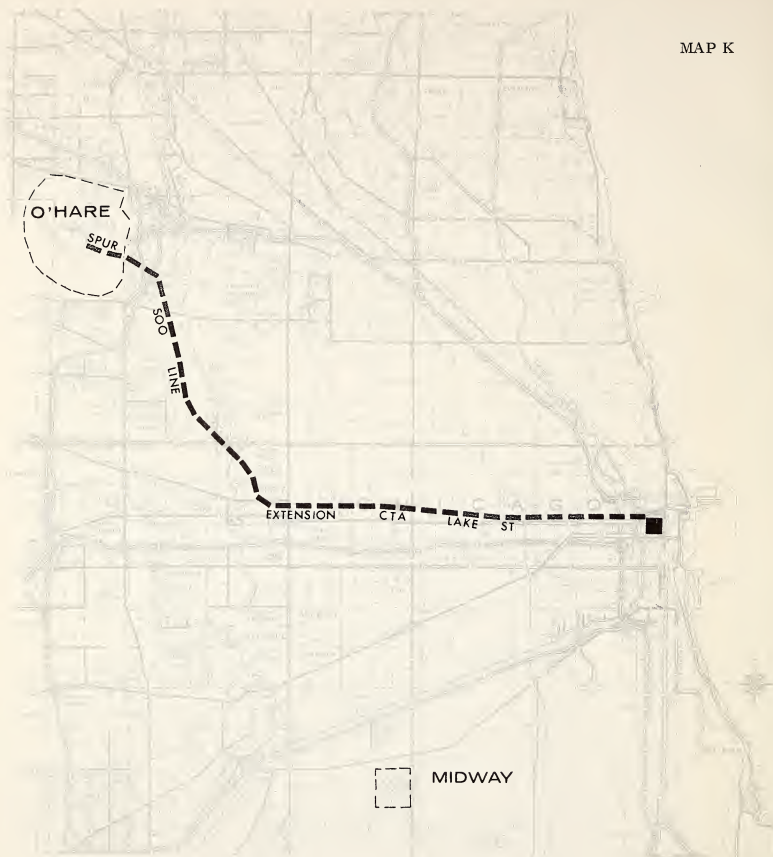
Capital improvements necessary to make this route operational include construction of an inclined trains and associated bridge work in the vicinity of Jefferson Park. This would enable trains to drop down from the elevated embankment of the Northwest Line into the Kennedy median. Also needed are five miles of roadbed, trackage, signals and the like between Jefferson Park and O'Hare Airport plus bridge works at the junction of the Kennedy-Tri-State Tollway-Mannheim Road.

Initial Observations

This route offers the advantage of segregation from seriously conflicting freight movements, complete separation of grade, and the shortest line haul between the Loop and O'Hare. Estimated running time between North Western Depot and the O'Hare airline terminals is twenty-five-twenty-eight minutes including a short transfer stop with the C. T. A. at Jefferson Park.

The disadvantage of the route centers about the large capital expense necessary to join the Northwest Line trackage with the Kennedy median strip and the five miles of new roadbed construction into O'Hare. Further consideration of this route is merited by its short travel time characteristic.

In addition, track capacity limitations on the Chicago and North Western's Northwest Line during morning and afternoon rush hours would require study to determine whether O'Hare trains with twenty minute headways in each direction could be accommodated.



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ROUTE K

C. T. A. Lake Street - Soo Line

This route would utilize the Soo Line right-of-way from a point two miles west of the C. T. A. Harlem Avenue Station into O'Hare on essentially the same spur track discussed under Route B. Capital costs would involve extension of electrified lines between Harlem Avenue and O'Hare in addition to those costs discussed under Route C.

Initial Observation

This route does not appear feasible at this time since C. T. A. trains would be crossing several streets at grade and in addition would cross the four track main line of the Milwaukee Road at grade. Again, previous objection to use of the Soo Line was raised by Soo Line management due to conflicting train movements.

Summary

This report has presented the gross pattern of potentially available right-of-way for incorporation in a Loop-O'Hare Airport rail service. Eleven basic routes have been discussed along with several minor variations from the eleven. Four of the eleven routes appear to merit further consideration by COMFORT. These four routes were selected on the basis of apparent transportation conflicts, necessary capital improvements, and running time between the Airport and the Central Business District.

The major potential transportation problems encountered involve dependability of service which is directly related to the probability of freight conflicts and the capacity of available trackage. Routes A, B, D, and G have one or more points at which freight trains might frequently interrupt O'Hare service. Routes C and K would require extensive construction in order to grade separate O'Hare service from both highway and Milwaukee Road cross movements. Only Routes H and I are completely segregated from freight traffic with only minor or avoidable freight conflicts existing on Routes E, F, (option) and J.

The largest capital expenditures necessary to fully implement an O'Hare service appear to apply to Routes H, I, J, and K where extensive lengths of roadbed and associated construction are necessary. The least amount of capital improvement is associated with Routes A, D, E, and F.

Since the proposed Loop -- airport service should be competitive with non-rush hour bus and auto speeds, travel time is an important analysis factor in route selection.

While rush hour driving time between downtown Chicago and O'Hare Airport can take as much as ninety minutes, non-rush hour driving time averages between twenty-five and thirty minutes.¹ Clearly any rail service connecting O'Hare and the Loop can offer a service superior to the highway vehicle bogged down in 10 to 15 m. p. h. expressway traffic. But to remain competitive during non-rush hour periods, rail service must compete with the twenty-five to thirty minute running times.

Relating known transportation conflicts on each route with an over-all average running speed results in an estimate of the competitive position of each route in terms of dependability and speed. Route J offers the fastest service between the Loop and O'Hare and appears to be dependable since there are relatively few transportation conflicts on the C. & N.W. Northwest Line. Both Route E and Route F (option) offer short running times and a good chance of dependable service. Route H offers an apparent dependable service, but not an exceptionally fast running time.

C & N.W. extension

CM, GP, P.

(CTA extension)

¹Data collected as part of the C. A. T. S. Northwest Corridor Modal Split Project during the autumn and winter of 1967-1968. Thomas Lisco, "Airport Access: Driving Times Between O'Hare Airport and Downtown Chicago," Research News (Chicago: C. A. T. S.), September-October, 1968.

Comparison of Loop to O'Hare
Running Times By Alternate Route^a

Route	Minutes - 40 M. P. H. Average Speed	Minutes - 45 M. P. H. Average Speed	Miles
A C. & N. W. - Proviso - Des Plaines Cutoff	: 29	: 26	19
B C. & N.W. - I. H. B. - Soo	: 27	: 25	18
C C. & N.W. - Soo	: 25	: 24	17
D C. & N.W. - Des Plaines	: 31	: 29	21
✓ E Milwaukee Rd. - Soo	: 25	: 23	17
F Milwaukee Rd. - Des Plaines	: 27	: 24	18
✓ F Milwaukee Rd. - Option	: 25	: 24	17
G I. C. - St. Charles - B. & O. C. T. - Soo	: 30	: 28	20
✓ H C. T. A. - Kennedy ^b	: 37	: 35	17
I C. T. A. - Lake - 1st Ave. ^c	: 39	: 37	20
J C. & N.W. - Kennedy	: 24	: 23	16
K C. T. A. - Lake - Soo ^c	: 37	: 35	18

^aRunning times are "assumed" average speeds from origin to destination including restricted speed areas. Assumed average speed is considered as possible based on analysis of present scheduled passenger train running times between known points on selected routes. Running time does not consider the possibility of delays due to conflicting train movements, either passenger or freight.

^bAverage running speed between Loop area and Jefferson Park calculated as 24 m. p. h.

^cAverage running speed between Loop area and Oak Park calculated as 25 m. p. h.

Recommendations

Based on the preceding descriptions of potential right-of-way for Loop - O'Hare rail service, four routes appear to warrant extensive investigation by COMFORT. These routes are:

- E Milwaukee Road - Soo Line
- F Milwaukee Road - Bensenville Yard - Option Spur
- H C. T. A. Kennedy Extension
- J C. & N.W. Northwest Line - Kennedy Extension

- E Soo Line management is not receptive to suggestions involving service over their right-of-way, citing lack of adequate capacity for their present freight operations as one real problem. However, reviewing the August field trip data, it appears that Route E can indeed utilize Soo Line right-of-way, and effectively by-pass Schiller Park Yard without conflicting with Soo Line management's plans to expand their facilities and increase their freight handling efficiency. Since less than 2.5 miles of Soo right-of-way would be incorporated into this route, it appears that some accommodation between COMFORT and the Soo Line could be reached.¹
- F The option of extending track between the O'Hare airline terminals and Milwaukee Road's Bensenville Yard avoids the problem of negotiating with several carriers. Objections based on the cost of tunneling under runways in order to approach the airline terminals are answered by the fact that each potential airport access route will cost money. Only an engineering study will give an adequate estimate of comparative route costs.
- H The C. T. A. - Kennedy Extension will offer a route directly integrated with the metropolitan C. T. A. network. Objections to this proposal center on the speed of the service and the nature of passenger amenities to be offered. For those who favor C. T. A. airport service, this route appears the most favorable of three C. T. A. alternatives.²
- J The C. & N.W. extension in the Kennedy median would offer the fastest service as well as the shortest line haul. Problems associated with this route center about construction costs, and possible conflict with existing passenger trains during rush hours.

¹The Cleveland Transit System Airport Extension utilizes former New York Central (now Penn Central) right-of-way for its trackage. New York Central management expressed dissatisfaction and anxiety with proposals initially submitted by C. T. S. However, an accommodation was reached after intensive analysis of the problems involved.

²The use of express buses in "reserved expressway lanes" is realistic, but not under the scope of this report.

A marketing study should be executed. One portion of this study would measure the travel habits of airline passengers between O'Hare Airport and selected districts in the metropolitan area. Information of this type would give an indication of the present and future mass transportation requirements of the airline passenger and an estimation of patronage to be derived from airline passengers relative to:

- frequency of Loop - O'Hare service
- amenities of Loop - O'Hare service
 - Speed
 - Comfort
 - Dependability
 - Safety
 - Convenience
 - Baggage Handling
 - Other
- pricing policy

Further research would analyze the present and future mass transportation needs of the labor market centered at and around O'Hare Airport. Which route would best serve the needs of this labor market and what type of service would be most competitive? Since the four recommended lines were primarily selected on the basis of serving the airline passenger, this might mean re-examination of some of the previously deleted routes. The final selection of a route will result from a balance between the market demands of the airline passenger and the airport area employee.

Once the character of the mass transportation market is determined, the capital costs and operating costs needed to operate over each route will have to be weighed and a financing program established.

The work yet to be started forms the key to the potential for the success or failure of Loop - O'Hare Rail Service. Availability of right-of-way is not a physical barrier to the initiation of such a service.

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